

COVID-19 BULLETIN – APRIL 24, 2020

By Alissa Demerse, Keri L. Bennett and Samantha Breslauer

In his daily address, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau provided further details on the Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance Program (“CECRA”), a program designed to support small businesses in conjunction with the provinces and territories.

Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance Program

As covered in our [April 16, 2020 COVID-19 bulletin](#), the CECRA is a collaborative cost-sharing program between the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to support small businesses for the months of April, May, and June.

The CECRA is expected to be operational by mid-May retroactive to April 1, 2020. The program will lower commercial property rent by 75% for small businesses affected by COVID-19. In order to be eligible for the CECRA, the small business must pay less than \$50,000 per month in rent and have temporarily ceased operations or experienced at least a 70% drop in pre-COVID-19 revenues. Non-profit and charitable organizations are eligible for the CECRA.

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation will administer and deliver the program. The federal, provincial, and territorial governments will provide the commercial property owner with a forgivable loan amounting to 50% of the rent. The tenant will be responsible for covering 25% of the remaining rent and the property owner will be responsible for covering the other 25%. The loan will be forgiven if the commercial property owner demonstrates that it has reduced the rent by 75%. The forgivable loan will be disbursed directly to the mortgage lender. The program also requires the owner and tenant create a rental forgiveness agreement that includes a moratorium on evictions for the duration of the cost-sharing program.

Further details on the CECRA will be released once final terms and conditions are available. Prime Minister Trudeau also announced that support for large businesses will be introduced in the near future.

A link to today’s announcement by the Prime Minister’s regarding the Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance Program can be found here. <https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/news-releases/2020/04/24/prime-minister-announces-partnerships-provinces-and-territories>

Privacy and Freedom of Information COVID-19 Update

As a result of the on-going COVID-19 pandemic, there have been changes to the statutory timelines prescribed in British Columbia’s *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, that could impact employers in B.C.



On March 18, 2020, the Information and Privacy Commissioner for British Columbia issued an order granting public bodies a 30-day extension of time, over and above the statutory timelines prescribed in British Columbia's *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. This order was in response to freedom of information requests received between March 1, 2020, and April 30, 2020.

On April 22, 2020, the Commissioner issued a further order granting public bodies an additional 30-day extension of time, over and above the statutory timelines, to respond to freedom of information requests received between May 1, 2020, and May 15, 2020.

For more information see: <https://www.oipc.bc.ca/news-releases/2404>

Our previous bulletin on Privacy and Freedom of Information in the context of COVID-19 can be found [here](#).

For any questions regarding Privacy, Freedom of Information and COVID-19 please contact Roper Greyell's Privacy + FOI lead, [Keri L. Bennett](#), at kbennett@ropergreyell.com.

Navigating COVID-19 in the Workplace

For further information relating to the COVID-19 pandemic and how it may impact your workplace, please look to our previous bulletins, which can be found on [Roper Greyell's COVID-19 resource page](#).

This memorandum is current to the morning of April 24, 2020, but the pandemic and the responses of federal and provincial governments continue to evolve, and this may impact the accuracy of the information in this bulletin. If in doubt about whether anything in this document is still current, please do not hesitate to [contact us](#).

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